



NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM  
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

September 30, 2003

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**AUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM GRANTS TO THE NATURAL HISTORY  
MUSEUM FOUNDATION FROM THE COUNTY SAFE  
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS OF 1996 BOND ACT AND THE STATE SAFE  
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, CLEAN WATER, CLEAN AIR AND COASTAL  
PROTECTION BOND ACT OF 2000  
PER CAPITA PROGRAM FOR SEISMIC REHABILITATION AND  
RENOVATION OF NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM 1913 BUILDING  
(SECOND SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT - 3 VOTES)**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Find that the allocation of funds from the Los Angeles County Safe Neighborhood Parks of 1996 Bond Act ("1996 County Proposition A") and the per capita grant program of the State of California Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000 ("2000 State Proposition 12") to the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Foundation ("Foundation") for planning and pre-construction activities related to seismic rehabilitation and renovation of the Natural History Museum 1913 building is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15262.
2. Authorize the Foundation to apply for a maximum of \$870,000 of 1996 County Proposition A funds for planning and pre-construction activities related to the seismic rehabilitation and related work on the Museum's 1913 building ("1913 Building Project"), with the remaining available \$3,480,000 to be applied for by the Foundation as part of a subsequent approval process by your Board of a lease-

leaseback or similar arrangement with the Foundation prior to any construction.  
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3. Authorize the Director of the Museum to execute a contract, in a form approved by County Counsel, for a maximum of \$100,000 of Second District 2000 State Proposition 12 per capita funds, to be used for planning and pre-construction services for the 1913 Building Project, with the remaining available \$900,000 of Second District State Proposition 12 funds to be sought as part of a subsequent approval by your Board of a lease-leaseback or similar arrangement with the Foundation prior to any construction.

#### PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION

The purpose of the recommended action is to allow the Museum to further develop for Board of Supervisors approval the plans, budget, and environmental documentation for the 1913 Building Project by receiving a portion of the funds designated to the Museum in the 1996 County Proposition A funds and 2000 State Proposition 12 per capita funds. At such time as the budget, schedule, and scope of work have been adequately defined to proceed with construction of the 1913 Building Project, the Museum and Foundation will return to your Board for any required action under CEQA and for approval for the Foundation to manage the construction process pursuant to lease-leaseback or similar arrangement.

#### The Project

The 1913 Building Project will consist of seismic upgrade and other life safety improvements related to rehabilitation of the original County-owned 1913 building of the Museum in Exposition Park to enhance the protection of the public, staff, and collections and restore historical architectural features of the building. The project is a continuation of a seismic upgrade initiated in the early 1990's. This project will result in a higher degree of seismic safety than was achieved through the initial, limited work. In addition, mechanical and electrical systems will be improved to enhance life safety and functionality. Work on finishes and architectural features will be limited to that impacted by the seismic and system enhancements.

The Museum and Foundation also are planning the improvement, development, restoration, and/or rehabilitation of the remainder of the Museum's Exposition Park facility. This will be a major project that includes restoration of some or all of the

additions built in the 1920's, removal of some or all of the additions built within the past fifty years, and/or construction of new facilities. This work, which is in the early planning

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stage, is a separate project that will be phased over several years and will be more fully defined, scheduled, and budgeted as a result of ongoing architectural, engineering, programmatic, and other studies.

The 1913 building is structurally independent of the newer portions of the Museum, and the seismic retrofit and other work of the 1913 Building Project may be accomplished without structural impacts to the newer portions of the Museum. The 1913 Building Project is independent of any work being considered for the newer portions of the Museum, and completion of the 1913 Building Project will not compel any future work or restrict the options for future work that may be performed on the newer portions of the Museum.

#### 1996 County Proposition A

Section 3, Subsection (b), Paragraph (8) of the 1996 County Proposition A designates \$5.0 million to the Museum for the renovation and improvement of facilities of the Museum or for grants to qualified non-profit organizations to carry out these purposes. The Foundation is a qualified non-profit organization.

On October 1, 1997, your Board approved a grant from the Museum to the Foundation of \$650,000 of 1996 County Proposition A funds designated to the Museum to manage the acquisition, delivery, and installation of an entry monument (the "Dueling Dinosaurs") at the Museum's Exposition Boulevard entrance. At the time your Board approved the project, the Museum and Foundation committed to return to your Board with more detailed plans for the expenditure of the remaining \$4.35 million in 1996 County Proposition A funding designated for improvements at the Museum's facilities.

This action seeks approval for expenditure of a maximum of \$870,000 of the remaining \$4.35 million on planning and related pre-construction activities for the 1913 Building Project.

#### 2000 State Proposition 12

The 2000 State Proposition 12 includes a per capita grant program through which the County receives funding for various parks, recreational, cultural, historic preservation, and similar projects. The County has designated \$1 million of this funding toward the

Museum's 1913 Building Project. This action seeks approval to contract with the Foundation at this time for a maximum of ten

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percent of that funding, which is available for planning and related pre-construction activities for the 1913 Building Project.

#### Reimbursement of Foundation Advances

The Foundation has advanced funds for the planning and pre-construction activities work that has brought the development of this project to its current stage. In addition, the Foundation has secured additional grants and private funding and believes that it will shortly be able to identify full funding for completion of the 1913 Building Project. When the budget, funding plans, and design work are at an appropriate stage, the Museum and Foundation anticipate returning to your Board to request approval for the Foundation to manage the development and construction of the 1913 Building Project.

A portion of the Foundation's advances for the 1913 Building Project was for activities that are eligible for reimbursement under 1996 County Proposition A and/or under 2000 State Proposition 12. Future pre-construction costs also will include eligible expenses. Therefore, it is appropriate at this time to contract with the Foundation to reimburse those advances and assist its continuing funding of the preliminary stages of the project, including the CEQA analyses that are necessary prior to your Board's consideration of final approval of the project.

Foundation requests for 1996 County Proposition A reimbursements for prior and future advances and expenditures will be approved by the Museum of Natural History (Department) pursuant to specific project agreements with the Regional Parks and Open Space District, as was the case for the entry monument project previously completed using 1996 County Proposition A funds. Foundation requests for 2000 State Proposition 12 reimbursements for prior and future advances and expenditures will be approved pursuant to the State and County procedures for those expenditures.

#### Subsequent CEQA Action and Construction Approval

As noted above, the Department will return to your Board at the appropriate time to seek approval for construction of the 1913 Building Project. CEQA review will continue as part of the planning process and any required CEQA approval will be part of your Board's approval of the construction process.

The Museum has been working for several months with the Department of Public Works, which concurs with this approach to design and construction of the 1913

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Building Project as a separate upgrade project within the overall long-term vision of the Museum.

The Chief Administrative Office concurs with these recommendations and County Counsel has approved this action as to form. The Foundation has agreed to assume the responsibilities to implement this project.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommended action is consistent with County Strategic Plan goals of Service Excellence and Fiscal Responsibility. The renovation and restoration of the 1913 Building will allow the Museum to enhance services and improve the protection and safety of the public and staff and allow the Department to maximize the use of State funds for this project.

#### FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

None. These recommendations will not affect net County cost.

Funding for these projects is available from the 1996 County Proposition A funds specifically designated for improvements at the Museum and from 2000 State Proposition 12 funds. The Foundation has identified grant and private funds for most of the expected costs of the 1913 Building Project and is actively fundraising for the remainder.

#### FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

County 1996 Proposition A specifically authorizes grants to qualified non-profits, such as the Foundation, to carry out the purposes of the designated allocation to the Museum of Natural History. A Project Agreement with the Regional Parks and Open Space District will specify the details of the projects and the funding arrangement for use of 1996 County Proposition A Project funds. The 1913 Building Project also is an eligible project for funding under the County's per capita allocation of the 2000 State

Proposition 12 since the project preserves a historical structure housing an important public cultural facility.

The contract with the Foundation will be similar to other contracts approved by your  
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Board to fund project-planning activities of the County's cultural and recreational facilities.

### NEGATIVE DECLARATION/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The recommended actions will have no impact on the environment and are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15262. Any required environmental documentation will be submitted to your Board prior to the implementation of any physical work.

### IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES

The recommended actions will not impact current services. The interim and long-term impact on Museum operations and facilities will be described as part of the upcoming submittal to your Board seeking approval for the project's construction.

### CONCLUSION

Approval of these recommendations will allow the Museum to continue planning for the seismic, life safety, and related rehabilitation and renovation of the historical 1913 building in Exposition Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane G. Pisano  
President and Director

C:     Executive Officer  
          Chief Administrative Officer  
          Auditor-Controller  
          County Counsel  
          Parks and Recreation  
          Public Works

President of the Board of Governors, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History

President of the Board of Trustees, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History